**SR-3 MEDIA ENGAGEMENT**

A.      Objective(s)

Establish a consistent working relationship with local and national media including broadcast, print, digital and social media in order to elevate community and national awareness about the mission and projects of the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program.

B.      Background

Media knowledge and understanding of the work of BTNEP and its importance to the sustainability of the estuary will help generate interest among various media platforms to develop and circulate stories and messaging about BTNEP projects.

C.      DESCRIPTION

In developing a cooperative relationship with the media it is important to always present editors and reporters with science-based credible, reliable and compelling story ideas. It is also advisable to exercise judgement if not restraint in alerting media to potential story ideas and availability.

Suggested approaches include, but are not limited to:

* Editorial meetings to educate editors and managers about BTNEP and its mission as well as specific projects
* Direct outreach to reporters for background purposes as well as to cultivate personal relationships
* Press releases regarding specific projects, progress of projects, individual recognition, advisories about areas of need, concern, or crisis.
* Establishment of a ‘stable’ of spokespersons that can become known to media as reliable sources of information. Individuals can be identified to speak to certain areas of expertise and the media made aware of these potential sources for interviews.
* Media training for the selected spokespersons is advisable.
* Schedule BTNEP principals and/or selected spokespersons for media appearances for regular segments as well as for specific event appearances.
* Produce video segments to be offered to media for use in reports and features.
* Maintain active social media (video streaming) messaging to inform and also entice consumers to seek more in-depth information about events and projects.

D.       LEAD AGENCY

The primary implementer for this action will continue to be the BTNEP staff. The BTMC and Program office will continue these efforts, coordinating all education and outreach efforts. BTNEP will include individual members of the BTMC, consultants, and community leaders as possible leads and partners in this action plan.

E.       TIMELINES and MILESTONES

These efforts will be ongoing throughout the program life. Each project will have different achievements and milestones. Project milestones will be reported to the BTMC, EPA, invested partners, and the community through various media sources.

F.      Possible range of costs and sources of funding

Total range of funding necessary annually for SR-3: **$50,000.00-$100,000.00**, which includes but is not limited to:

* Salaries
* Operating Services
* Supplies
* Equipment
* Content production and distribution

Sources of funding include local, state, federal, individual, industrial, institutional, NGO, and private organizations.

G.      Performance measures (Qualitative where possible)

The monitoring strategies are intended to serve as mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of projects implemented under the action plans. These strategies should only be used as a guide, not as a requirement. It must be recognized that the monitoring strategies will be expensive to implement and that, because all levels of government and much of the private sector currently have severe funding restraints, they may not be affordable without significant modification. The monitoring strategies do not override or replace monitoring that would be done by an agency related to specific agency-sponsored projects.

Possible Data Gathered

1. Level of awareness and interest in BTNEP, its mission and projects, by local and national media.
2. Number of requests for interviews and information from news organizations.
3. Analytics from website and social media sites, number of inquiries, views, etc.

Monitoring

* Parties responsible: News coverage can be monitored either by BTNEP staff, BTMC members, and/or paid monitoring services.
* Timetable for gathering data: quarterly for BTMC, regularly for EPA, and/or as events occur or projects progress.
* How data is shared: BTMC quarterly meetings, media reports, and electronically, utilizing the most current technologies available. Broadcast video stories can be archived and uploaded to BTNEP website and other BTNEP social media sites.
* Possible data gaps: Rapidly changing technology demands continued research and funding in this area.
* If additional funding is needed: always.